

Item Details

Legistar # 18-0285

Ordinance – Amending State Speed Limit in Certain Zones, Beach Access Road 3A	
<u>Council Meeting Dates:</u> First Reading – March 20, 2018 Second Reading - March 27, 2018	<u>Item Being Considered:</u> Ordinance

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 53, Section 53-255 Schedule VI, to decrease the speed limit on Beach Access Road 3A, from Saint Bartholomew Avenue to the beach.

SUMMARY:

Beach Access Road 3A on North Padre Island was rebuilt with concrete pavement from Saint Bartholomew Avenue to the easterly end with the beach under Bond 2014, Proposition 2. Under Texas Legislative Code Section 545.352, the prima facie (default) speed limit for Beach Access Road 3A is 30 MPH. A municipality has the authority to alter a speed above or below the prima facie speed limit based on an engineering traffic investigation.

Under the Urban Transportation Plan, Beach Access Road 3A is functionally classified as a C1 Minor Residential Collector. It is a 0.11-mile-long street that consists of two narrow 10-foot wide travel lanes with a horizontal curve along sand dunes. It carries an average daily traffic volume of 516 vehicles per day (2016),

A staff investigation determined there was no existing ordinance that altered the speed below the 30 MPH default speed limit on Beach Access Road 3A along the subject area. To determine the posted speed limit, an engineering and traffic investigation and speed zone study must be performed. In Texas, the guidelines and procedures for an engineering and traffic investigation and speed study can be found in the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT's) Procedures for Establishing Speed Zones.

An engineering and traffic investigation considers factors such as existing roadway features (curves, surface width, constrained shoulder width, etc.), crash history, cross streets, school crossings, and sites that generate traffic. Speed studies determine the 85th percentile speed, which represents the speed most drivers will be traveling at or below, so they are conducted during average weekdays and under favorable weather conditions. The recommended speed limit is generally set to the nearest value ending in 5 or 0. Guidelines in TxDOT's Procedures for Establishing Speed Zones permit a reduction in the final speed limit to less than 10 MPH below the 85th percentile speed based on engineering judgment and factors considered during the traffic investigation.

Staff considered several factors: (1) lack of shoulders, (2) narrow pavement width, (3) beach access, and (4) lack of street lighting. Because 125 cars cannot be checked during the two-hour speed check, staff drove several trial runs at the selected speed of 15 miles per hour. Based on the engineering and traffic investigation factors, the City Traffic Engineer deemed a speed of 15 miles per hour as reasonable for the conditions on Beach Access Road 3A.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / BOARD ACTIONS:

January 22, 2018 - City Transportation Advisory Commission recommended approval of ordinance amendment.